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ABSTRACT

This action research project evaluated the impact of an intervention for reducing the inappropriate student behavior of primary school students. Participating were kindergartners in a large metropolitan area in northern Illinois. Inappropriate behaviors, such as physical aggression and using inappropriate words for self-expression, were documented by means of behavior checklists and surveys of teachers, students, and parents. The resulting 16-week intervention consisted of: (1) reading children's literature relating to children's problems and using puppets to dramatize the literature; and (2) implementing the Second Step Violence Prevention Program, a conflict-resolution and social-skills curriculum using lessons, stories and discussion, role playing, and take-home activities; and (3) implementing the Megaskills Program, a program to build motivation, confidence, effort, responsibility, initiative, teamwork, problem-solving, caring, perseverance, and common sense. Post-intervention assessments indicated that the number of hitting, pushing, and kicking incidents decreased by 80 percent and the number of physical contact incidents (touching, pinching, biting) and the use of inappropriate words decreased by 51 percent. The amount of time spent "telling the teacher" decreased as students improved their problem-solving skills and learned to solve problems independently. (Five appendices contain sample Second Step lesson plans and instructional materials. Contains 19 references.) (KB)

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ED 412 007

IMPROVING STUDENT DISCIPLINE AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL

Caroline R. Kelly

An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI Skylight
Field-Based Masters Program
Chicago, IL

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for reducing inappropriate student behaviors, that inhibit academic development. The targeted population consists of kindergarten students in a large metropolitan area located in northern Illinois. The problem of inappropriate behaviors was documented through behavior checklists and surveys of teachers and parents.

Analysis of probable cause data reveals unclear expectations of students, lack of a secure family environment and violence in daily life and in the media.

A review of solution strategies resulted in the selection of children's literature, teaching techniques, curriculum that allow students to participate in activities that emphasize conflict resolution.

Post intervention data indicated improved student interpersonal behavior, enhanced student self-esteem, increased teacher instructional time, and improved overall classroom climate.

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DEDICATION

This action research project is dedicated to my parents George and Barbara Kelly, my daughter Alicen Kelly, my Gram, the late Alice N. Kelley-Haffenden, my special animal friends, Simon and Sadie Sue, all my family, students, and friends, especially Lisa Hansen, for all their love, patience, support, and encouragement to always believe in myself! Thank-you! CRK

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

Problem Statement

The students of the targeted school district display inappropriate behaviors, which inhibit their academic development. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes teacher observation, behavioral checklist, student interview, teacher survey, and parent survey.

The targeted school is one elementary school in the district. The total number of elementary students in the district is 15,536 and 149 attend the targeted school. The building consists of pre-kindergarten to second grade students. The racial breakdown of the students at the targeted school is as follows: 40.3% White, 58.4% Black and 1.3% Mexican American (Stiles Elementary School, 1995).

Low-income is defined as students who are from families receiving public aid, living in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, being supported in a foster home with public funds or eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. The school has 63.8% low income students.

Limited-English-Proficient students are those who are eligible for bilingual education. There are not any students who are eligible or receive bilingual education.

A perfect attendance rate of 100% means that all students attended school every day. The attendance rate at the targeted school in 87.9%. The student's mobility rate is 36.6%. Chronic truants are students who are absent from school without a valid cause for 10% or more of the last 180 school days. The chronic truancy rate is 7.2% with a total of 11 chronic truants.

The targeted school was constructed in 1957 and is located in a lower middle class neighborhood with two housing projects within its attendance boundaries. The target school consists of eight classrooms. The average class size is 12.0 for preschool, 23.5 for kindergarten, 20.3 for first grade, and 24.0 for second grade. The facilities include a gymnasium, art/music room, computer lab, and library. The gymnasium is used as a cafeteria and movement/drama activities.

The special programs at the targeted school include Success For All (John Hopkins Reading Program), AIMS (Activities Integrating Math and Science), Everyday Math, Multiple Intelligence's Awareness, which emphasizes drama and movement (dance) once a week for 30 minutes, and computer instruction twice a week. Eligible students receive speech/language services and resource services.

The reading program at the targeted school is Success For All. Kindergartners begin reading instruction in January. At the beginning of the year, first and second grade students are assessed and then placed into homogeneous groups. First and second grade students move daily to the teacher who teaches at their reading level.

Students are assessed at the end of every eight weeks, and have the opportunity to move to a new reading group. Students also receive tutoring in the afternoon to improve reading skills. Each reading block takes place for ninety minutes. The components of the reading program are listening comprehension, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and independent reading and shared reading. Success For All was created for at-risk students to increase their reading ability to grade level within three years of starting the program. The achievement goal at the targeted school is for half of the first and second grade students to read at or above level (based on Success For All testing).

Special curriculum programs that are implemented include: AIMS (Activities Integrating Math and Science), drama, movement, and computers. AIMS and Everyday Math are math and science activities that foster cooperative learning hands on approach to learning. Students are making decisions, probing ideas and questions, and solving problems. The teacher acts more as a facilitator, and allows students to explore and learn. Lessons for AIMS and Everyday Math are taught daily for 30 minutes. The staff has been trained in using Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. The targeted school has a partnership with a preschool in the area, drama and movement (dance) class are taught once a week for 30 minutes in the gymnasium by two teachers from the preschool. Computer instruction is provided twice a week for 30 minutes to improve math and reading skills. Later in the year, usually in January, students begin writing instruction. Students also enjoy various learning games during computer time.

The targeted school has developed a school-wide self-management plan. The first two weeks of school are devoted to building social skills. Teachers create many ways for all students to have a chance to be successful. Second Step Violence Prevention Program is used to improve student conduct and aids in decreasing the number of student referrals and reducing the number of repeat referrals for any given student. Students who need additional help are referred to the student support specialist and/or the psychologist with whom they meet weekly.

The targeted school is striving to increase community and parental involvement and is developing an interactive parental program that stresses the accomplishments of the parents in the community. Incentives are provided to encourage consistent attendance at school events. The targeted school also has volunteer program that utilizes community members.

The total staff population is 38. Administration includes: one principal, one reading curriculum implementor, one curriculum implementor, and one student support specialist. The student support specialist team consists of a part-time psychologist, social worker, student support specialists, speech and language pathologist, and nurse. The non-certified staff is made up of one secretary, one parent liaison, one librarian, three noon aides, one building engineer, and one custodian. The teaching staff at the targeted school includes: two preschool teachers, two kindergarten teachers, two first grade teachers, two second grade teachers, one special education resource teacher, one art teacher, one physical education teacher, one music teacher, one computer teacher, and five reading teacher/tutors.

The average years of teaching experience at the targeted school are 7 years. Out of eight teachers, one has a master's degree, and five are pursuing a master's degree. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the staff is: 68.8% White, 18.0% Black, 6.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 6.3% Mexican American.

Surrounding Community

The targeted elementary school is located in a large metropolitan area. The total population is 143,263. The community is located along a major river and is the second largest urban area in the state. The racial characteristics include: White 81.1%, Black 15%, Mexican American 4.2%, Asian/Pacific Islander 1.5%, American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut 0.3%, and Other Race 1.5%. Gender characteristics are male 37.5% and female 52% (Chamber of Commerce, 1996).

The total number of households in the community is 124,882. The median household income is $31,768; the median family income is $37,533; and the per capita income is $14,273. Seven and three tenths of the total number of families earn less than $10,000. The median cost of a single family in the community is $88,300 (Chamber of Commerce, 1996). The total number of employed persons is 166,475. The labor force consists of 6,875 construction and mining, 52,125 manufacturing, 8,200 transportation, communications, utilities, 8,175 wholesale trade, 26,375 retail trade, 7,125 finance, insurance, real estate, 41,775 services, and 15,825 government workers.

Education is available at the post high school level in many places. These include two four year colleges, two two year colleges, comp sites for state

universities. Thirty-six percent of the community have their high school degree; 18.7% have some college with one degree; 6.0% have an associate degree; 10.7% have a bachelor's degree, and 4.9% have a graduate degree or professional degree (Chamber of Commerce, 1996).

The district includes four high schools, four middle schools and 39 elementary schools. There are 26,754 students in the district. The racial/ethnic background of students is 64.7%, White, 25.3% Black 7.1%, Mexican American, 2.8% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 0.2% are Native American/Alaskan. The number of low income families in the district is 38% and 3.6% are limited-English-proficient.

The attendance rate is 91.5% and mobility rate is 21.5%. Chronic truancy for students is 9.2%. The 1993-94 expenditure per pupil is $6,308 (Stiles Elementary School, 1995).

The district employs 1,658 teachers. The racial/ethnic background of these teachers is 91.3% White, 4.9% Black, 2.4% Mexican American, 1.0% Asian/Islander, and 0.4% Native American. Gender characteristics are 26.4% male and 76.3% female. The average teaching experience is 16.3 years. Teachers with bachelor's degrees account for 63.3% of the teaching staff. The average salary for teachers is $42,720 and the pupil-teacher ratio is 18.5:1 (State School Report Card, 1995). There is one principal per building with one superintendent attending to the district. The average salary of an administrator is $63,375 and the pupil-administrator ratio is 264.7:1 (State School Report Card, 1995).

In 1989, a group of citizens called People Who Care, filed a lawsuit because of schools closing in the district. A large number of minority students attended eight of the ten schools. The district was charged with discriminating against students who are Black or Mexican American origin. Even though the district spent $44 million in three years to improve the education of Black and Mexican American students, in 1994 a federal judge found the district guilty of discrimination. Short term agreements started immediately during the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years. These actions were to be implemented until the long term trial was over. The trial began in October, 1995. The areas of discrimination that were found included bilingual education, student tracking and ability grouping, within school segregation, student assignment, faculty and equipment disparity, employment disparity, staff assignment, transportation, extra curricular, special education, and the composition of the board of education (Rockford School District 205, 1996).

The school district has made a significant gain in integrating schools. The number of integrated schools has increased from 15 to 28. The number of racially identifiable schools declined from 21 to 11. Many programs have been added to help integrate schools in the district. These are known as enhancements programs. The enhancement programs include magnet schools, CAPA (Creative Arts Performing Academy), and gifted programs. There are 4,389 students enrolled in enhancement programs. This includes 3,376 (21.7%) elementary students, 393 (9.5%) high school students. The number of students who participate in the Transitional Education Program is 749. This program serves 679 Mexican Americans and 70 Asian students.

In order to integrate schools, a federal judge ordered the district to implement a student assignment plan called Controlled Choice. This ruling was made on March 12, 1996. This plan would be implemented in elementary schools. Controlled Choice is a plan that enables parents/guardians to request a list of five schools that they would like their child to attend. The schools requested must be in their pre-described zone. Students would be places in schools by the district, maintaining all schools within a preset minority percentage guideline of plus/minus 15% of district wide minority percentages. School proximity, sibling preferences, language barriers, and a grandfather clause would be factors when placing students. Shortly after the ruling was made, the school board voted to implement Controlled Choice at the middle school and high school level (Rockford School District 205, 1996).

National Context of Problem

Today, education is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic. Today, teachers spend more time attending to discipline problems.

Young children are experiencing broken homes, drug abuse within the family, less parental involvement, and television is being used as a primary source of entertainment and values. Teachers are dealing with the effects these experiences are having on students (Committee for Children, 1991). There are too many children feeling unloved, unimportant, and inferior. All children need to feel loved and special. When these needs are not met at home, children will find them elsewhere. Schools are seeing an increasing number of students at younger and younger ages bringing weapons to school. Students who are discipline problems usually have a history of

failure, which includes poor academic performance and behavior. When students are told over and over that they are not successful, in time they believe it. In order to be successful, students will chose to misbehave instead of feeling stupid or incompetent (Mendler, 1992). Disorder in the classroom is a major threat to students education (Albert, 1989). Establishing a classroom that is free from discipline problems is challenging, but not impossible. Students need to learn how to grow academically and socially (Canter, 1992).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

PROBLEM EVIDENCE

The result of an observation/behavioral checklist, the number of student discipline referrals, and the result of parent surveys provide evidence for the problem. The observation/behavioral checklist was employed from September 3rd through the 20th. The four categories are as follows: fails to keep hands to him/herself, fails to keep feet to him/herself, physical contact (touching, pinching, or biting), and uses inappropriate words to express him/herself. Table 1 presents to data collected during September 3rd through the 20th, 1996.

Table 1

Categories/Numbers of Inappropriate Behaviors

	Number of Incidents Week of September 3 - 6	Number of Incidents Week of September 9 - 13	Number of Incidents Week of September 15 - 30
Fails to keep hands to him/ herself	29	36	18
Fails to keep feet to him/ herself	9	8	5
Physical Contact (touching, pinching, or biting)	38	40	13
Uses inappropriate words to express him/herself	8	11	5

As the data in Table 1 indicate the number of discipline incidents increased the second week in all but one area, and decreased in all categories the third week. The data show the biggest problem, is physical aggression. Even though physical aggression is the biggest problem, the data in Figure 1 illustrate the number of incidents decreased more than half during the third week of observation.

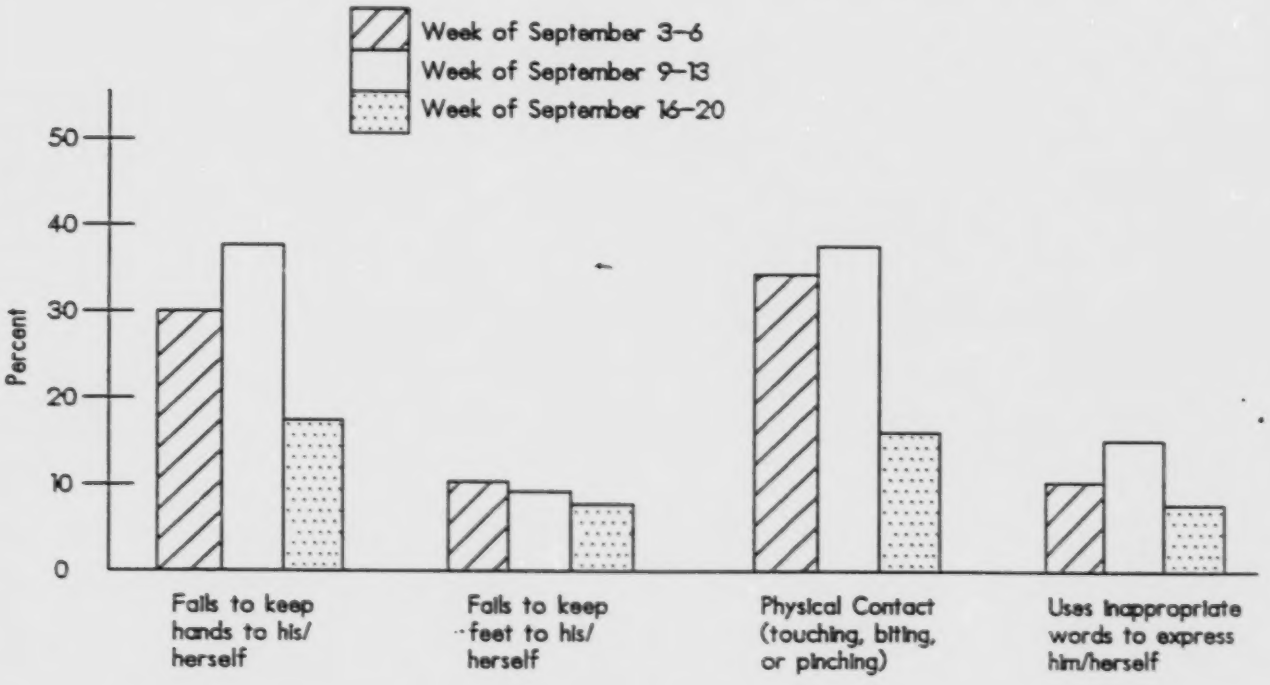

Figure 1. Categories of inappropriate behaviors and a comparison of frequency of the incidents.

During the 1994-95 school year, the number of discipline referrals decreased from 94 to 78 during the school year. The discipline goals and plans for improvement are to decrease the number of student referrals from 78 to 54, with attention given to tracking and reducing the number of repeat referrals for any given student.

During the 1995-96 school year, the number of discipline referrals did not decrease. Instead, the number of discipline referrals increased 94 to 105.

The parent surveys are included as problem evidence, because many children respond to conflicts in the school setting the way they are taught to respond to conflicts at home. The parent survey includes various methods of parental discipline, and actions parents believe need to be taken if students use violence in school. Figure 3 shows the methods of discipline parents use to decrease inappropriate behaviors at home.

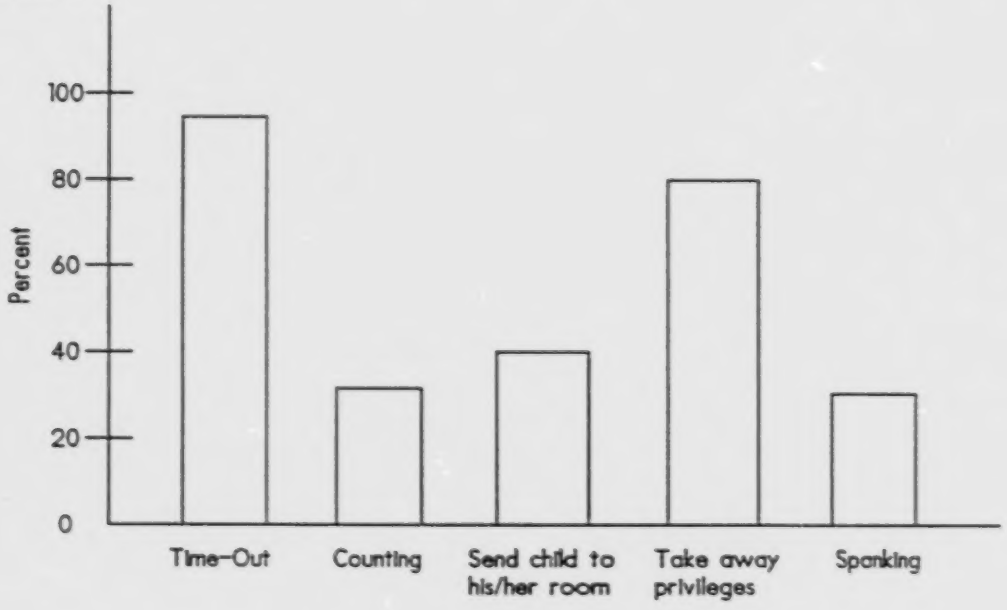

Figure 3. Parent Survey—Methods of Discipline

The parent survey reveals over 90% of parents use time-out; between 20-75% of parents use counting, spanking, taking away privileges, or sending the child to his/her room. The parent survey indicates parents use one or more discipline methods to decrease inappropriate behaviors.

The parent survey indicates if students use violence in school, parents should be notified; students should be suspended; privileges at school should be taken away; students need to receive time-out; and/or the parent or school administration should talk to the student(s). Figure 4 reveals the parents' input as to what should be done when students use violence in school.

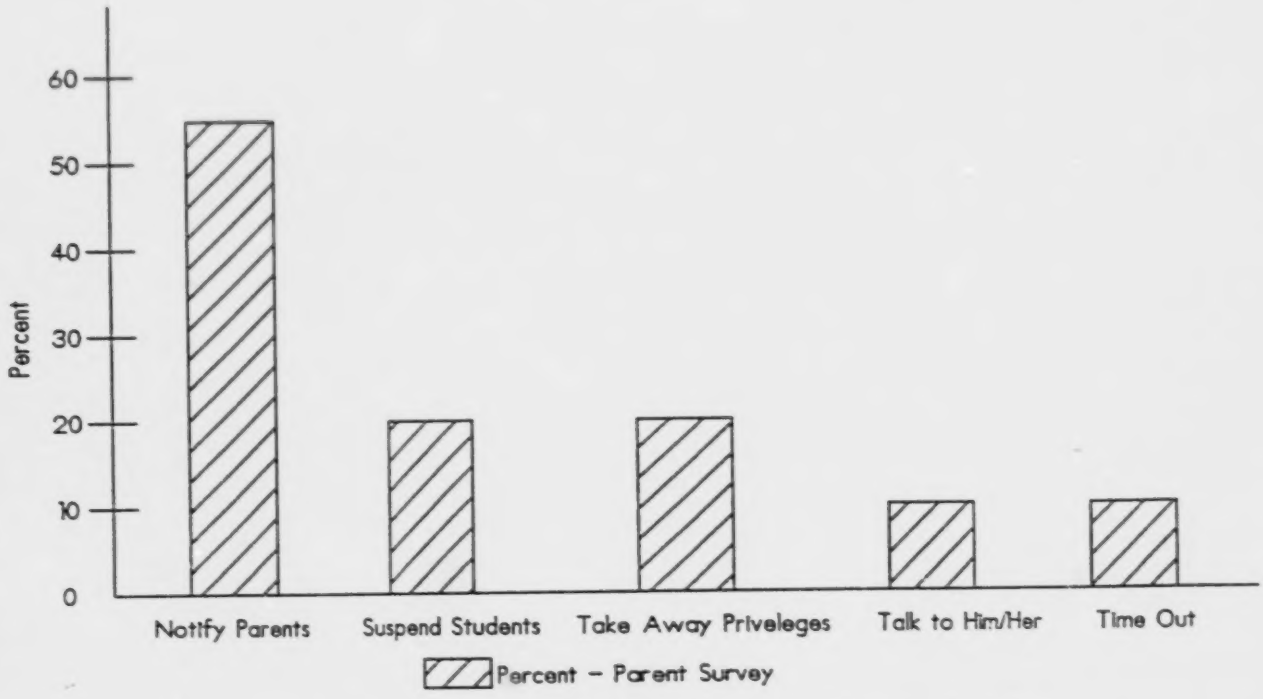

Figure 4. Parent Survey–Addressing student violence in school

The parent survey shows 93% of parents advise their child to tell his/her teacher if someone hits or kicks; between 10-20% advise their child to either hit or kick the other child back or walk away. Only 6% gave their child the advice to tell the other child to stop the inappropriate behavior. Figure 5 reveals advice given to students if another child hits or kicks them.

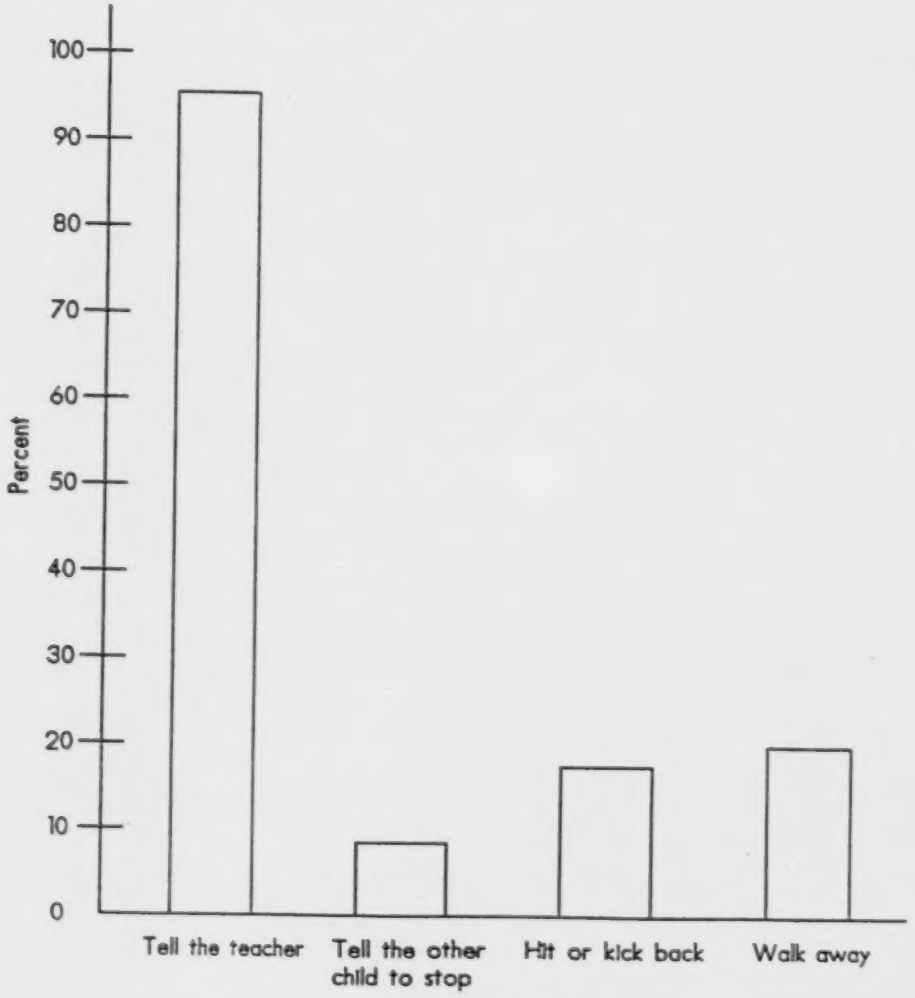

Figure 5. Parental Advice

The parent survey indicates over 40% of parents would talk to their child if he or she was responsible for hitting or kicking another child; 30% would take away their child's privileges, and between 10-20% of the students would have to apologize to the other student at school receive time-out or a spanking at home, or be grounded. Most parents are not fostering the use of physical aggression by their child. The majority of the parents would either talk to their child or take away his/her privileges. Figure 6 shows how parents would respond if their child hits or kicks another child at school.

Figure 6. Parental responses of how to correct inappropriate behaviors at school

PROBABLE CAUSE

(Site-Based)

An individual student interview was employed to determine how students feel about inappropriate behaviors in school and actions that need to be taken to decrease inappropriate behaviors. Figure 7 indicates how students feel if someone hits or kicks them.

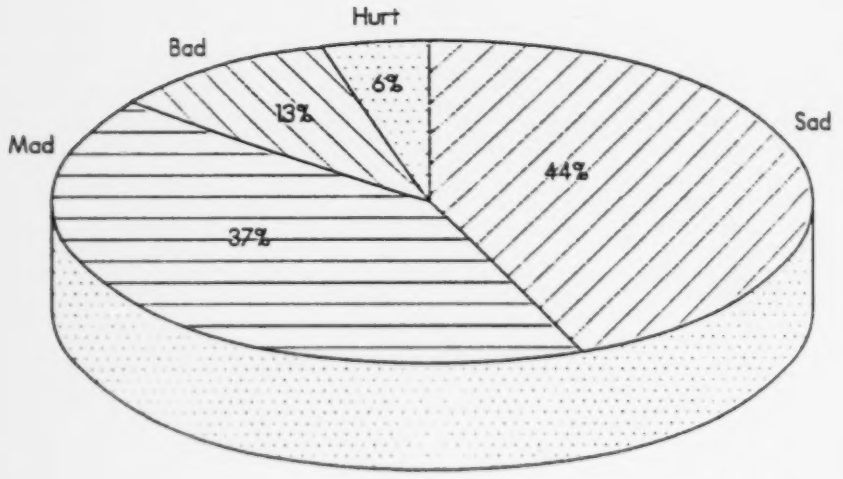

Figure 7. Student responses of how they feel if someone hits or kicks them

The student survey reveals 44% of students feel sad if someone hits or kicks them; 37% feel mad, 13% feel bad, and 6% feel hurt.

Student interviews indicate 80% of students would tell the teacher if someone hit or kicks them; 12% would hit or kick the other student back, and 8%R would tell a parent. Figure 8 illustrates these responses.

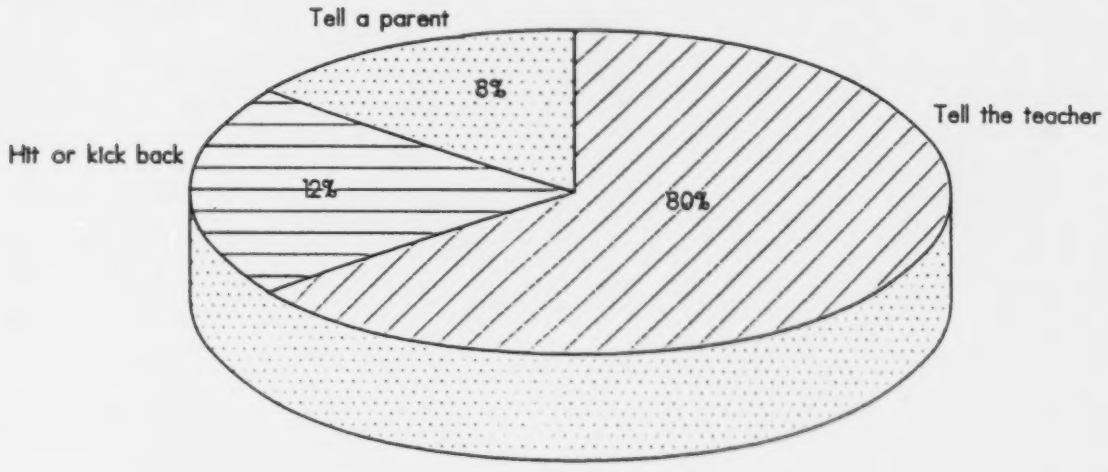

Figure 8. Student interview

The responses vary as to what students have been taught about hitting or kicking. Student interviews indicate 36% of students have been taught not to hit or kick others; 6% of the students say it is bad to hit or kick someone; 6% of the students say they would receive a spanking; 13% of the students would tell a parent if someone hits or kicks them; 13% of the students would hit or kick a student if another student hits or kicks them first; 13% of the students would remind the other student to keep his or hands or feet to themself; and 13% of the students state they would get into trouble if they hit or kick another student. Figure 9 illustrates the students' responses.

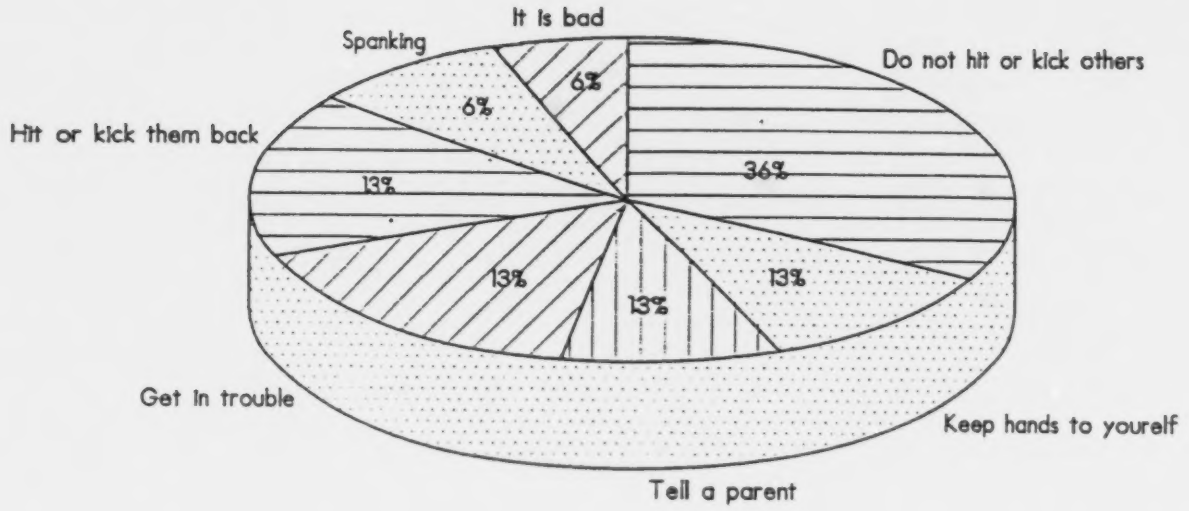

Figure 9. Student responses toward physical aggression

The information in Figure 10 indicates 60% of parents advise their child to tell the teacher if someone hits or kicks them; 27% would advise their child to hit or kick the other students back; and 13% of parents would advise their child to tell them.

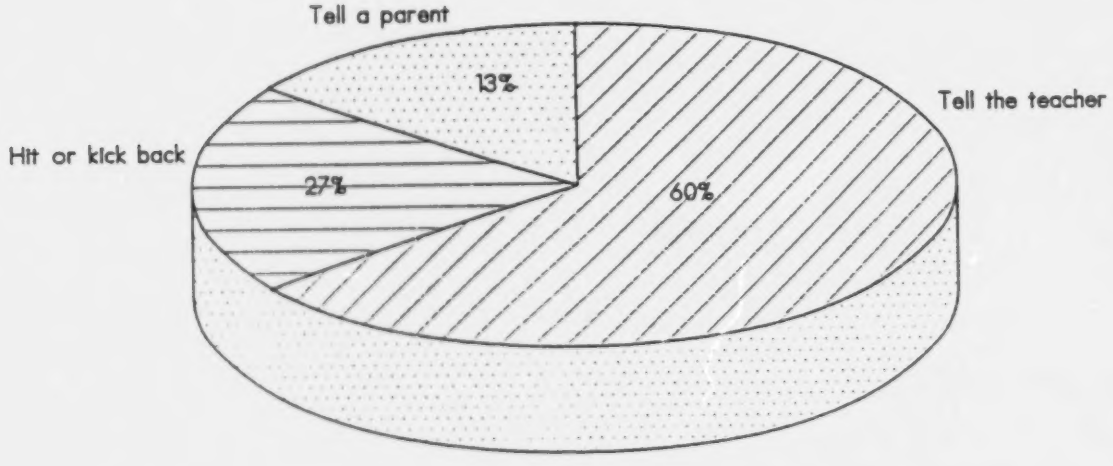

Figure 10. Parental advice to children when responding to aggressive behavior

In order to solve the problem of inappropriate behaviors in the classroom, 60% of the students agreed students must stop inappropriate behavior when the teacher gives the student a warning; 20% agree students who do display inappropriate behaviors should be placed in time-out; 13% agree the person who is acting inappropriately should be taken to the principal; and 6% agree students who are acting inappropriately should be removed from the classroom into another room and 6% agree they would be very mad if others did not act appropriately in school.

The teacher survey was distributed to each teacher in the building. The results of the teacher survey indicate almost 75% of teachers believe inappropriate behaviors in the class are increasing; 87% of the teachers believe inappropriate behaviors affect student learning, and almost 90% of the teachers believe parent notification decreases inappropriate behavior. Figure 11 illustrates the results of the teacher survey.

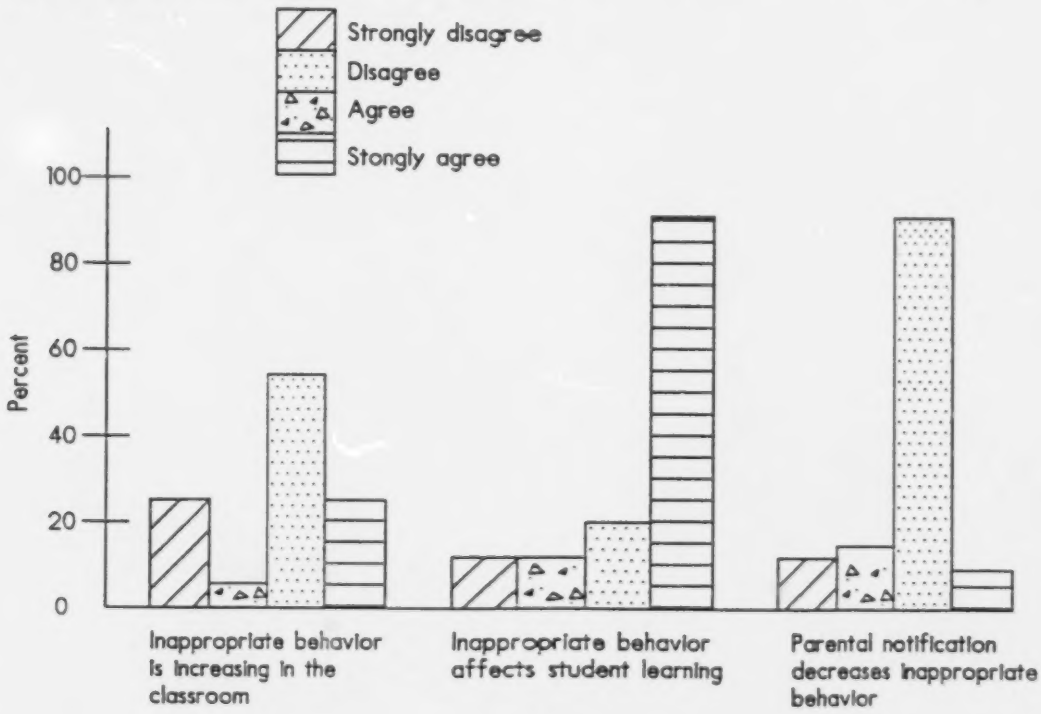

Figure 11. Teacher Survey

The second component of the teacher survey inquired about methods to decrease the number of inappropriate behaviors. Teacher methods include: time-out, praise, positive rewards, parental support, administration and community support, consistent discipline modeling good behavior, and redirecting inappropriate behaviors. Most teachers use praise and positive rewards to decrease inappropriate behaviors. Figure 12 illustrates the methods teachers use to decrease inappropriate behaviors.

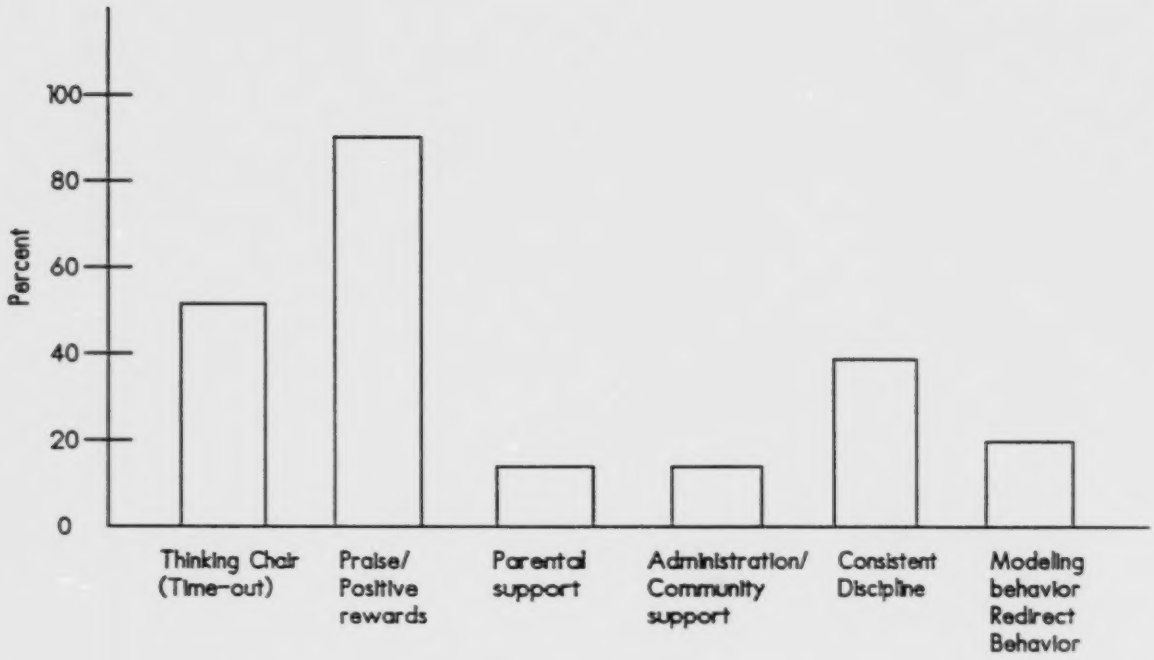

Figure 12. Teacher Survey: Methods to decrease inappropriate behaviors

PROBABLE CAUSE

(Literature)

A review of the literature suggested reasons for the lack of appropriate behaviors by students. Research data suggest the following probable causes:

A. Single parent homes

B. Drug abuse within the family

C. Less Parental involvement

D. Television used as a primary source of entertainment and teaching values

E. The media

F. Violence in society

G. "Me" generation

H. Unclear student limits

I. Behavioral expectations from home

J. The choice of different behaviors to feel significant and important in different groups (peer pressure)

K. Lack of acceptable outlets for feelings

Analysis of these data suggest questions concerning the role of the family, drug abuse within the family, violence in television/media, and peer pressure. These are social factors that negatively affect a child's self-esteem, decision making, and behavioral (Mendler, 1992). Family is the base and stability for children. The "traditional" family of today includes single-parent families and two working parent

families. Statistics have suggested that between 35 and 50% of all school-age children will experience change in their family structure before they complete school. Twelve of 100 children born in 1986 were born to unmarried parents; 40 were born to parents who will divorce before the child is 18; 5 have parents who will separate, and 2 have parents who will die. Overall, only 41 percent will reach their 18th birthday in a "traditional" family (Curwin & Mendler, 1988). Therefore, many students come to school more concerned for basic security needs than for learning. When the ability to rely on parents for security is lost, children are in desperate need of nurturing in order to ensure their emotional development (Curwin & Mendler, 1988).

Television and other media damaging affects on children. Children's programs glamorize violence and present characters who are defiant of authority figures. Many children are less likely to see the difference between fantasy and reality on television. Violence on television reinforces the ideas that violence is acceptable, and it is okay to dominate others (Committee for Children, 1991). A study by Bandura, Heresmann & Evon, and Lefkowitiz, et. al., show that children who view these programs act out more toward their peers than children who do not (Committee for Children, 1991).

Children who are born to mothers who abuse drugs and alcohol during pregnancy are more likely to have neurological and related physical problems. These children have shorter attention spans and tendencies to be more aggressive than their peers. The use of crack cocaine has increased the number of children born with special needs.

In order to satisfy their basic human needs, which may be neglected by society and unstable families, students with behavior problems act out. When teachers recognize that all children need a sense of belonging, they will be helping students choose appropriate behavior to achieve their special place in the classroom. According to John Dewey, public schools are an "embryonic community", which reflects many of the values of the larger society (McDaniel, 1994). Our schools are a microcosm of the world outside.

Jenny Gray states:

> "...From the moment he signs a contract the teacher shares with the public school a tacit obligation to society. In the main we allow ourselves to be governed by duly elected person and their representatives. This is the only way our society can function in an orderly way. It is not good, therefore, that out young people become adapt at the fine art of insurrection. The teacher who allows students to victimize him in his classroom indirectly encourages them to victimize the man at the newsstand, the stranger in the park, and the cop on his beat (p.225).

Discipline in our schools is a major concern in American education. Discipline ranks as one of the most important problems facing American education today. Student discipline problems and teacher methods for establishing and maintaining discipline are areas of concern to both schools and society in general (Moore & Cooper, 1984). Students should not be expected to behave perfectly, but they should

be responsible for their actions. When students are taught and learn how to discuss problems, instead of using verbal or physical fighting, they are learning how to solve problems. This is a skill that will last a lifetime (Rich, 1992). Society needs to acknowledge all children need to feel a sense of belonging in order to excel. When children feel neglected by their families and society, they may respond by acting out. Usually, this occurs in the child's classroom at school.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

The literature search for solutions included: Second Step Violence Prevention Program which presents conflict scenarios, reading and writing conflict stories, and student role play and discussions. Megaskills is a program that builds student motivation, confidence, effort, responsibility, initiative, teamwork, problem-solving, caring, perseverance, and common sense. Other solutions may include teacher proximity, private conferences, conflict resolution, guidance, and grouping children who have inappropriate social skills with more socially competent children.

Children must be taught how to solve, predict, plan, share, cooperate, and empathize in order to understand how to get along in the world with others. Discipline is better learned through guidance than through punishment. Since 1926, the NAEYC (known in the early years as the National Association for Nursery Education) has consistently encouraged a guidance approach to teaching young children to behave appropriately.

One of the best goals in good discipline is to give each child increasing control of his/her life. Teachers and students should be thought of as a team, and the teacher's job is to help the children grow academically, as well as individually. Children form feelings of self-worth at a very young age from a collection of perceptions about their bodies, race, intelligence, similarity to others in their peer group, socio-economic status, and other self-images. The major influence is the sense of the child's parents and significant others' continuing evaluation of him/her. Each day, whether at home or school, discipline can diminish or enhance a child's feeling of worthlessness or self-worth (Ideas that work, 1988). Some types of disciplinary methods are harmful and negative. If these forms of discipline listed below are followed over a long period of time, children may experience low self-esteem as a permanent part to their personality. The following forms of discipline need to be addressed, analyzed, and altered:

1. Frequently saying, "Stop That!", "Don't do it that way!", "That's not so bad considering YOU did it", "If it weren't for you...".
2. Critizing
3. Discouraging
4. Creating constant obstacles and barriers
5. Blaming, shaming
6. Saying, "You always...", "You never..."
7. Using sarcastic, caustic, and cruel "humor"

8. Physical punishment

9. Using removal from the group or isolation (time-out chair, the corner, and child's room)

By creating a positive climate, teachers promote self-discipline among their students. A child will exert more effort "to be good" if he/she is motivated. Overall, there will be far fewer power struggles from "you against me" situations. Creating a positive climate for young children includes: complimenting a child's effort, sharing important activities with the child, smiling, hugging, a pat on the back, and showing each child approval on a daily basis.

The Second Step Violence Prevention Program (Committee for Children, 1991) helps young children between the ages of four and six years old learn prosocial skills and reduce impulsive-aggressive behavior. The purpose of this program is to increase children's ability to identify others' feelings, others' perspectives, and to respond empathetically to others. Also, the program's goals are to decrease impulsive and aggressive behavior in children by applying a problem-solving strategy to social conflicts, and to practice behavioral social skills. Recognizing angry feelings, and using anger-reduction techniques help decrease angry behavior. The components of the program include: lesson cards, story and discussion, role playing, and additional take-home activities. Complete implementation of the curriculum varies. The time schedule can be used as follows: used daily-6 weeks, three times a week-9 weeks, twice a week-14 weeks, and once a week-28 weeks. Research showed that this program has significantly increased children's empathy, problem-solving, and

anger management. Overall, the Second Step Violence Prevention Program has received favorable ratings by teachers. The Megaskills Program (Rich, 1992) has been referred to as "The Never Ending Report Card". The goal of this program is to provide students with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of his/her habits, behaviors, attitudes that are needed in order to increase their success in school and beyond. Children think and build their Megaskills daily. Homework is known as "family connection activities". This program strongly encourages families to participate as educational partners. Research indicates that children who use the program enjoy the activities, and parents feel more involved in their children's education. The values, attitudes, and behaviors that determine a child's success in school and on the job are the main ingredients of Megaskills. The components of the solution include the objective and process statements:

Objective: As a result of increased emphasis on student's interpersonal skill development and class management procedures during the period of September 1996 to January 1997 the all-day-kindergarten students from the targeted class will increase their ability to positively interact with their peers and decrease inappropriate behaviors as measured by teacher observation/behavioral checklist, student survey, and role playing.

In order to accomplish the objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Construct curriculum activities that promote solving problems through active student participation.

2. Include Second-Step Violence Prevention Program and Megaskills Program as a daily program.

3. Read children's literature which relates to children's problems, and use puppets to dramatize the literature.

The action plan will be implemented at the targeted school starting September 1996 to January 1997. The action plan includes daily activities and weekly themes.

Action Plan

Week 1 & 2:

Data Collection: Time spent and number of inappropriate behaviors
Begin September 3 through September 20; Student Survey: September 20

Week 3:

Introduction - What are inappropriate behaviors?
Students will brainstorm what are inappropriate behaviors
Students will help teacher create classroom rules and consequences
Introduce "Buddies of the Week", What is a buddy?
Monday - Pair students with a buddy
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy. What did you like about your buddy and Why?
Introduce Second Step Violence Prevention Program - What is it?
Introduce behavior chart - Students receive a daily sticker for appropriate behavior and after 5 consecutive days of appropriate behavior students will select prizes from teacher treasure box.
Introduce Zoey and P. Mooney puppets
Introduce center activities
Send home parent letter introducing Second Step Violence Prevention Program and individual behavior charts for treasure box prizes
Children's literature circle time (teacher will read story)

Week 4:

Theme: "Getting to know each other"
Send home parent letter informing parents that students will be learning to identify feeling (happy, sad, mad, hurt and scared)
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Students will predict how other people feel by reading body language and facial expressions
Introduce Megaskills Program - What is it?
Send home parent letter introducing Megaskills Program
Class meeting on Friday: Students will discuss and brainstorm ideas to solve any inappropriate behaviors that occurred during this week

Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 5: Theme: "We stick together; We're friends"
Teacher will introduce Impulsive Puppy and Slowdown Snail puppets
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Students will show others how they care by responding to others feelings in a positive manner (empathy)
Megaskill of the week: Caring
Class meeting on Friday: Students will discuss and brainstorm ideas to solve any inappropriate behaviors that occurred during the week
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 6: Theme: "Sometimes I get angry"
Send home parent letter
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Students will learn how to clam down when angry or upset (anger management control)
Megaskill of the week: Teamwork
Class meeting on Friday: Students will discuss and brainstorm ideas to solve any inappropriate behaviors that occurred during the week
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 7: Theme: "I can express myself"
Send home parent letter
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Redirecting negative feelings to positive solutions and feelings (problem solving)
Megaskill of the week: Effort
Class meeting on Friday: Students will discuss and brainstorm ideas to solve any inappropriate behaviors that occurred during the week
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 8: Theme: "I can help"
Send home parent letter
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Conflict resolutions skit performances to solve daily inappropriate behaviors
Megaskill of the week: Initiative
Class meeting on Friday: Students will discuss if method of using daily skits to solve problems is working and should it be continued
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 9: Theme: "My classroom/My school"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Continue conflict resolutions skits
Megaskill of the week: Responsibility
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday: Discuss overall classroom climate and behaviors
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 10: Theme: "Learning about myself and others"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Review empathy skills
Megaskill of the week: Confidence
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 11: Theme: "Do your best"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy

Second Step: Review problem-solving skills
Megaskill of the week: Perseverance
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 12: Theme: "Actions equal consequences"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Review anger management skills
Megaskill of the week: Problem-Solving
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 13: Theme: "You can do it"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Review empathy, problem-solving and anger management skills
Teacher will give students a problem and students will brainstorm ideas of how to solve the problem and present ideas for a solution or solutions to the given problem
Megaskill of the week: Common Sense
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 14: Theme: "We are a super class"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Second Step: Continuing reviewing empathy, problem-solving, anger management skills. Teacher will give students a problem and students will brainstorm ideas of how to solve the problem and present ideas for

a solution or solutions to the given problem
Megaskill of the week: Motivation
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 15: Theme: "We're working together"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Megaskills: Review all components: caring, teamwork, effort, initiative, responsibility, confidence, perseverance, problem-solving, common sense, and motivation
Introduce "Smiley Face" Chart as a whole class incentive for appropriate behavior
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 16: Theme: "We're great"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Continue smiley face incentive charts and individual behavior charts
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Continue individual behavior charts
Children's literature circle time

Week 17: Theme: "We have positive attitudes"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Introduce what a peer conference looks like/ sounds like
Continue whole class incentive of smiley face chart and individual behavior charts
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday

Free play with puppets
Children's literature circle time

Week 18: Theme: "We can solve any problem"
Continue center activities
Monday - "New Buddies of the Week"
Friday - Students will share and discuss pro's about their buddy
Review what a peer conference looks like/ sounds like
Continue whole class incentive of smiley face chart and individual behavior charts
Continue conflict resolution skits
Class meeting on Friday
Free play with puppets
Children's literature circle time

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effect of the intervention, weekly themes, and class meetings will be implemented in students' weekly schedules. Daily activities and programs include: an individual behavior charts, conflict resolution skits, free play with puppets, children's literature story time, Second Step Violence Prevention Program and Megaskills Program. Student interviews, discipline referrals, parent and teacher surveys, and an observation/behavioral checklist will be held as part of the assessment process.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to improve student behavior in the class room setting. Increase of student violence and inappropriate behaviors was a major concern for student safety and life-long social skills. The goal of this project was to focus on methods that "teach" students how to improve their behavior, and transfer what they learn to other settings. As a result of increased emphasis on students' interpersonal skill development and class management procedures, during the period of September 1996 to January 1997, the all-day-kindergarten students from the targeted class would increase their ability to positively interact with peers and decrease inappropriate behaviors as measured by teacher observation/behavior checklist teacher journal.

Interventions that were implemented to accomplish this research project include: Second Step Violence Prevention Program, Megaskils Program, puppets to dramatize literature that relates to children's problems, centers, role playing, music/songs/poems, and super students incentive chart.

Second Step Violence Prevention Program was implemented on a daily basis. Students received training in empathy, impulse control, and anger management. Students learned to: identify feelings, predict how other people feel, show others they

care, solve problems, perform social skills, calm down, and redirect their feelings in more positive ways. Students role played, and learned songs/poems about feelings and how to redirect their feelings. The first three lessons of each category-empathy, impulse control, and anger management can be found in Appendix A.

Students learned problem solving skills that included: "What to do about problems" and "What to do when you are angry". The five steps for solving problems included:

1. What is the problem?
2. What can I do?
3. What might happen if...?
4. Choose an idea and use it.
5. Talk to a grown-up about it.

The five steps for calming down included:

1. How do I feel?
2. Take three deep breaths.
3. Count slowly to five.
4. Say "Calm Down" to yourself.
5. Is it working? If not, what can I do now?

A sample of the student-made books of "What is the problem?" and "How do I feel?" can be found in Appendix B. The nine components of the Megaskills Program included: caring, teamwork, effort, responsibility, confidence, perseverance, problem -solving, common sense, and motivation. Each megaskill was implemented, along with the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and parent letters were sent home for the specific skill steps. The teacher provided a list of books that parents could read to their child that related to the weekly social skill. A parent letter and a sample of each social skill plan can be found in Appendix C.

Music, songs, and poems were implemented daily. The poem, "I believe in myself" and songs "Take a Deep Breath", "How I Feel", and "Work It Out" were used to promote self-esteem, and to help students become aware of their feelings. A sample of the poem and songs can be found in Appendix D.

Super Students incentive chart was a reflection of daily class behavior. Each day students could earn "smiley faces" that were given by the teacher. When the teacher observed students on-task, solving problems, using previous Second Step Violence Prevention Program and Megaskills Components, and using appropriate words instead of hands or feet to solve a problem, or express him/herself, the teacher drew a happy (smiley) face on the board. Even though, no formal announcement was made when the teacher put the smiley face up on the board, students pointed this out among themselves. A sample of the "Super Students" incentive chart can be found in Appendix E.

Students were paired with one other person for Buddies of the Week. This part of the action plan was phased out after the first week. Students wanted to change partners within an hour, before and after lunch, and the next day. Another problem that occurred was students would forget who their buddies of the week were, and it was too overwhelming for young students. Buddies of the Week would work better with older students. Class meetings were held on Fridays. Again, due to the young age of the students, it is recommended that this part of the action plan be revised to a daily class meeting. By having daily class meeting during the last part of the day, students were helped to recollect daily events, and set goals for the next day.

This gave students who may have had a "bad" day encouragement for a fresh start the next day.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess how students behave in their class room setting with their peers and individually, a weekly tally of discipline incidents was maintained throughout the intervention. These data were aggregated by month and are presented by Table 1.

Categories of Inappropriate Behaviors and Frequencies by Month

Behavior Category	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
Fails to keep hands to him/ herself	106	47	96	7	21
Fails to keep feet to him/ herself	27	22	40	13	15
Physical Contact (touching, pinching, or biting)	111	42	66	24	46
Fails to use appropriate words	30	16	11	8	32

The intervention appears to have had a positive effect on all targeted discipline behaviors. The number of incidents of students hitting, pushing and kicking decreased by 80%. The number of incidents of physical contact (touching, pinching, or biting)

and the use of inappropriate words to express him/herself decreased by 51%. The teacher researcher concluded that there would have been a greater decrease overall, but winter break may have triggered more inappropriate behaviors during the month of January.

In September, 80% of the students said they would tell the teacher if someone hit or kicked them. When the teacher researcher asked students in March what would they do if someone hit or kicked them, the whole class agreed there should be a conference with the teacher, the student who was hit or kicked, and the student who hit or kicked the other student. This does no mean "tattle" on a student, but it means students talk and discuss the problem that occurred. The teacher researcher observed a student comforting another student that was hurt. The attention was given to the person who was hurt, not the person who may have caused what happened. Students have said, "We're all friends!", "Are you okay?", "Can I help?". Students improved their problem-solving skills, and learned to solve problems on their own. The amount of time spent "telling the teacher" has decreased.

It is a common occurrence, in kindergarten, for students to "cut in line" or in kindergarten language it is referred to as "budging in line". During the time for September to March, the teacher researcher observed students saying, "Does it really matter where we are in line?", "We are all going to the same place", "Next time, just ask me and you can get in front of me". The majority of the time, the student who wanted to "budge" ahead in line, would say he/she was sorry, and ask to get in line ahead of the student. Students reminded each other, what behavior is acceptable or

not acceptable. The daily songs and poem have really helped the students cope and deal with feelings. One student remarked, "Michael is singing that volcano song again, because he's mad!". That was great! He calmed himself down and redirected his feelings of anger.

Students feel good about themselves as individuals and as a whole class. Students help solve problems, cope with their feelings, and express themselves in appropriate ways. These are all life long skills that will transfer to other areas, and students are more aware of others' feelings. That atmosphere of the classroom is an "ours" not "mine" attitude with everyone.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on the numbers of inappropriate behaviors, the students showed a significant improvement in appropriate behaviors. The amount of teacher time and energy devoted to solving student disputes was reduced. The skills of empathy, impulse control, and anger management skills learned in the Second Step Violence Prevention Program and Megaskills Program were transferred to academics and activities in and out of the classroom setting. Problem-solving skills increased, and the entire classroom climate has improved. The Second Step Prevention Program and Megaskills Program was a great asset to their research project. It is strongly recommended that the two programs listed above are presented together. It is also extremely important to communicate the goal the researcher would like to accomplish to other colleagues and specialists (P.E., Art and Music) in the building and keep them updated on the progress. This creates an

overall positive atmosphere when students are at P.E., Art, or Music class. This way, students know that the goal in all areas of their academic environment are similar. Keep in mind that every intervention found to be effective in one classroom may not always work in every class. Each class is different and unique; therefore a variety of methods need to be implemented to reach every child. Afterall, a teacher touches the lives of each child in his/her class, and what the teacher does in that classroom that one year will effect students for the rest of their lives.

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UNIT I
Lesson 1

EMPATHY TRAINING
What Is *Second Step?*

Unit Goal

- The goal of this unit is to increase children's ability to identify others' feelings, take others' perspectives, and respond empathically to others.

Concept

- Rules are important for group discussions.

Language concept: *rule*

Objective

CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO:
- provide rules of conduct for group discussions.

Notes to Teacher

It is important to allow children to help make up the rules for how to behave in a group. Since they may have difficulty coming up with guidelines at this point, leading questions have been provided. Children's involvement in this task will increase commitment to the rules and set a climate of cooperation. If you have already established rules in your class, take this time to review them. The warm-up exercise will help set the stage and can be used again to quiet the class and focus their attention. The story and discussion section is brief in this lesson; reading one of the listed books is suggested.

Warm-Up: "If You Can Hear Me"

(With the class in a circle) If you can hear me, reach to the sky. (Slightly softer) If you can hear me, touch your toes. (Softer) If you can hear me, put your hands on your head. (Softer yet) If you can hear me, put your hands on your hips. (Whisper) If you can hear me, sit criss-cross applesauce. (Mouth words) If you can hear me, put your hands in your lap. (Now begin lesson in a quiet, but audible voice.)

Story and Discussion

Each day we are going to spend time learning about our feelings and how to get along with other people. I will be showing you pictures and telling stories, then we will talk about the stories. The pictures and stories come in this box (show box). It is called *Second Step* (point to title). *Second Step* is like a very big story book.

Before we start, we need to make some *rules* for how we are going to behave when we talk about the stories. Rules tell us how to act in a group. One rule is: "Raise your hand when you want to say something."

1. What might happen if everyone talked at once? (We could not hear each other.)

Let's think up some other rules...

2. What might happen if some children play when we are in the group? (It might be hard to listen.) What would be a good rule about playing around? (Keep your hands and feet to yourselves. Stay in your own space.)

Show me how you should sit.

3. How would you feel if it was your turn to talk and the others weren't listening? What is a good rule about listening to others? (Listen when others are talking.)

Show me what parts of your body you listen with. (Cup ears forward and look at the children.) That's right—your ears and your eyes. Listen with your ears and look at the person who is talking.

4. Who can tell me what the rules are? (Prompt the children.)

5. When will we need to use these rules today? (Discuss day's activities and highlight when children will need to follow the rules.)

Let's practice using the rules. We are going to talk about what you did last weekend. Very good, _____ raised her/his hand.....(Continue discussion for 3-5 minutes, praising children who display knowledge of the rules.)

In-Class Activity

Have children take turns asking the group a question and then choosing a child who has her/his hand up.

Transfer of Training

Continue to praise children when they adhere to group discussion rules. Clearly state the behavior you are praising, such as "Johnny, I can tell you're listening by the way you are looking at me and sitting quietly. Very good." Before group activities, remind the children of the rules.

Books

Please Pass the Peas by Dina Anastasio
Perfect Pigs by Marc Brown
Animal Manners by Barbara Shook Hazen
Manners Can Be Fun by Munro Leaf

Home

Take-Home Letter: Introduction to *Second Step*

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Appendix A
Second Step
Impulse Control Lesson

UNIT II
Lesson 1

IMPULSE CONTROL
Slow Down—Stop and Think

Unit Goal

- The goal of this unit is to decrease impulsive and aggressive behavior in children through learning and practicing a problem-solving strategy combined with behavioral skill training.

Concepts

- Problems are difficult or troublesome situations.

Language concepts: problem, impulsive

Objectives

CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO:
- identify problems in given situations.
- give examples of problems they might have with other people.

You Will Need

- puppets
- Puppet Script #1
- Problem Card Set from Teacher's Guide

Notes to Teacher

Unit II introduces a problem-solving strategy and behavioral skill training. It is important to carefully read the Unit Description in the Teacher's Guide regarding the teaching of these. The problem-solving strategy is self-instructional; that is, it is designed to be said out loud by children so that they can guide themselves step by step through solving a problem. Specific behavioral skills are taught as solutions to common problems. For example, *trading, sharing* and *taking turns* are behavioral skills children learn in order to solve the problem of *wanting to play with the same thing as someone else*. Problem solving is cognitive (involves thinking), while behavioral skills are behavioral (involve doing). Both are equally important—children need to know *what* to do in a problem situation, as well as *how* to do it. This first lesson introduces the unit and the puppet characters. Guidelines for using the puppets also appear in the Teacher's Guide. The language concept, *problem* may be difficult for children under five. Repeat the Problem Card Set activity until children have mastered the concept.

Warm-Up: "Impulsive Puppy and Slow Down Snail"

(See Puppet Script #1.)

Story and Discussion

Today we are going to talk about what is coming up in *Second Step*. You will be learning what to do when you have problems with other children.

1. What is a problem? (When you have trouble with another person. When you can't figure out what to do about something.)

2. What problem does Impulsive Puppy have? (He doesn't listen; he rushes into things; he bites and licks; he interrupts.)

3. What are some types of problems you have had with other kids? (Pushing, grabbing. Note: Children may tell personal stories. Rephrase each problem into a few words or one sentence describing a problem category.)

4. What did Slow Down Snail say to Impulsive Puppy? (Slow down—stop and think.)

Everyone say it slowly and quietly: "Slow down—stop and think." Slow Down Snail will be teaching Impulsive Puppy how to slow down and stop and think. The puppy will learn what to do when he has a problem. And you will learn what to do when you have a problem.

Activity

Now we are going to play a game with pictures. (Using the Problem Card Set in the Teacher's Guide, hold up the cards in a fan shape.) I want you to pull a card out one at a time and tell me if the picture shows a problem or if it does not show a problem. (If the children have difficulty deciding whether a card shows a problem, ask "What is happening in this picture?...Is [children's answer] a problem?")

Transfer of Training

Check the children during the day for their comprehension of the concept *problem*. "We can't find the big glue bottle; is this a problem?"

Books

We're in Big Trouble, Blackboard Bear by Martha Alexander
Thomas in Trouble by Andrea Da Rif
The Other Emily by Gibbs Davis
The Elephant in Duck's Garden by Judy Delton
I Don't Want to Go by Anne O'Brien
Benjamin and Tulip by Rosemary Wells

Home

Take-Home Letter: *Second Step*, Unit II

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UNIT III
Lesson 1

ANGER MANAGEMENT
Am I Angry?

Unit Goal

- The goal of this unit is to decrease feelings of anger and encourage social problem solving in children through recognition of their own angry feelings and use of anger-reduction techniques.

Concepts

- Our bodies alert us to angry feelings.
- Angry feelings are okay, but angry behavior can be destructive.

Language concepts: *a little—a lot, tense, relax*

Objectives

CHILDREN WILL BE ABLE TO:

- recognize physical signs which indicate anger and give reasons for controlling anger.

You Will Need

- Calming Down Step #1
- body outline (one copy per student)
- crayons, paint, and/or felt markers
- A Little—A Lot (4 photo cards in Appendix)

Notes to Teacher

Recognizing the signs of anger is the first step in controlling anger. It is important to note that anger in itself is not necessarily negative; it is often necessary for making constructive changes in our lives and society. It is what one does with anger that is key; angry, impulsive behavior is often destructive to relationships or property. Young children may have trouble separating angry feelings (internal) from angry actions (external). Help them to understand the difference between feelings and actions. Be aware that there are cultural and individual differences in the way people show anger. The children may need to spend time discussing the differences. Also keep in mind that discussion of anger may prompt disclosures of abuse from children. It is important to handle disclosures in a sensitive manner and make necessary reports according to your state guidelines. See the Teacher's Guide for further guidance.

Warm-Up: "A Little—A Lot"

(Use the sequence of anger cards titled "A Little—A Lot" in the appendix.) I have four pictures of a little girl. (Hold up cards out of order.) How do you think she is feeling? (Children respond.) Yes, she is feeling mad or angry. In some pictures she is feeling *a lot* of anger and in others she is feeling *a little* anger. (Put cards on floor in center of circle.) Who can point to the picture in which she is showing no anger? (Put the neutral picture first in line.) Who can point to the picture which shows a little anger—less anger than any other picture? (Continue from here until you have a line-up showing the degrees of anger.)

Story and Discussion

Today we are going to talk about what happens to our bodies when we feel a lot of anger. (Show Photograph.) This is Dennis.

1. How do you think Dennis is feeling? (Angry) How can you tell? (Wrinkle in forehead; clenched teeth; clenched fists; mouth in frown.)

Show me what you look like when you are angry. Now everyone tense your whole body up like this (demonstrate). Okay, now relax. When you are angry your bodies tense up like that. This might give you a tummyache or a headache. You might also feel hot.

2. People show anger differently; how do people sometimes act when they are angry? (Yell; hit; throw things; hit things; start fighting; stomp around; be quiet.)

Everybody gets angry sometimes. It's okay to feel angry. Feeling angry is not bad, but how you act when you are angry is important. Angry behavior—like hitting, spitting, and pushing— is not all right.

3. Why not? (It hurts other people's bodies and feelings.)

Tell me what makes you angry. Use "I feel" statements. I will start. "I feel angry when..."

Today we talked about how we feel when we are angry. (Put up Calming Down Step #1.) Everyone say, "How do I feel?" Tomorrow we will talk about what to do when we are angry.

Activity

Now let's color a picture of ourselves showing what we feel like when we are angry. (Sit children up with colored crayons, paint and/or felt markers, and give each child a copy of the body outline. You may want to hand out plain paper instead and see what the children produce.)

Transfer of Training

When children become angry during the course of a day encourage identification of their anger with "I feel" statements.

Books

Feelings by Aliki
Kate's Quilt by Kay Chorao
My Mother Lost Her Job Today by Judy Delton
I Hate My Brother Harry by Crescent Dragonwagon
Dina's Mad, Bad Wishes by Barbara Joosse

Home

Take-Home Letter: *Second Step*, Unit III

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What To Do When You Are Angry

Calming Down Step #1

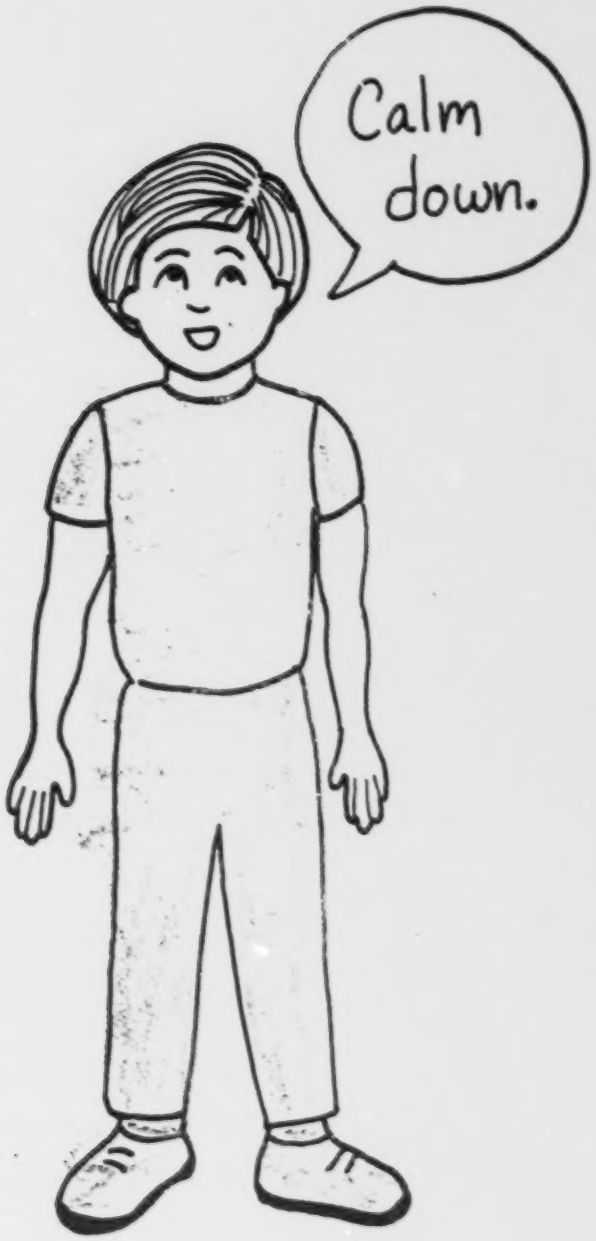
How do I feel?

Calming Down Step #2

Take three deep breaths.

Count slowly to five.

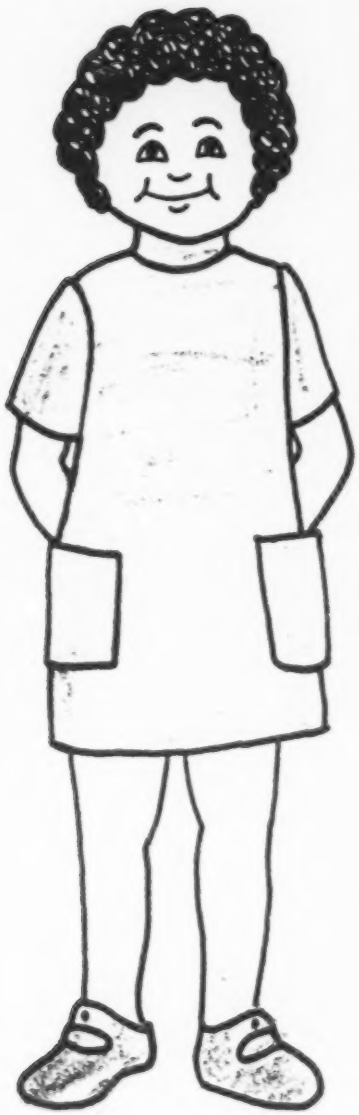
Say "calm down" to yourself.



Problem-Solving Step #5

Is it working?

If not, what can I do now?



Appendix B
Student-Made Book
What To Do About Problems

Problem-Solving Step #1

What is the problem?

Problem-Solving Step #2

What can I do?

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Problem-Solving Step #3

What might happen if...?

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Problem-Solving Step #3

What might happen if...?

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Problem-Solving Step #4

Choose an idea and use it.

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Calming Down Step #5

Talk to a grownup about it.

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
Introduction to *Second Step*

date 9/23/96

From the classroom of Miss Kelly at Stiles

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

We are starting a new program in your child's class called ***Second Step.*** The goal of this program is to build your child's social skills and self-esteem by giving her/him tools to solve everyday problems.

Children who learn and use the skills presented in this program are more likely to get along with other people and do better in school.

The *Second Step* lessons are divided into three areas:

1. **Empathy Training**
   Children learn to:
   - identify feelings (happy, sad, mad, scared...).
   - predict how other people feel (by reading faces, body language).
   - show others they care (by responding to others' feelings).

2. **Impulse Control**
   Children learn to:
   - solve problems.
   - perform social skills (sharing, taking turns...).

3. **Anger Management**
   Children learn to:
   - calm down.
   - redirect their feelings in more positive ways.

You will be getting several more Take-Home Letters. These will let you know what your child is learning. Please take some time to try the suggested activities. Talking about the program with your child will help her/him to use the new skills at home.

Also, I'd be happy to hear from you! Please let me know what you think of the *Second Step* program.

Sincerely,
Miss Kelly

Appendix C
Second Step
Parent Letter

TAKE-HOME LETTER
***Second Step*, Unit I**

date Sept. 30

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

During the next two months your child will be learning about feelings:

happy sad mad surprised afraid disgusted

Your child will also be learning that:

- people may have different feelings from each other. (One child is scared by something, while another child is excited about the same thing.)
- feelings may change. (For example, a puppy may be lost and then found. In this situation, the feelings go from sad to happy.)
- some actions are accidents. ("Joey didn't mean to do it; it was an accident.")

And your child will learn to:

- predict other's feelings. ("If I grab the ball then Tina might feel sad.")
- tell others how s/he feels. ("I feel sad when you go away.")
- listen to others.

Here are some **suggested activities** you can do with your child:

1) Match the faces above with the feelings.
2) Play "I feel____ when _____ by filling in the spaces with different feelings and situations. ("I feel scared when I get lost in a store.")
3) When reading a book, talk about the characters' feelings and discuss times you and your child felt the same way.
4) When your child is showing a feeling, help her/him to give the feeling a name. ("I see you're frowning; how are you feeling?")

By listening to and talking about feelings, you will be helping your child to feel valued and to be more understanding of others' feelings. I hope that you have time to work on these skills at home. Let me know!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

Second Step
Parent Letter

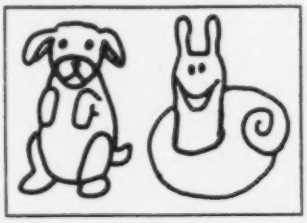
TAKE-HOME LETTER
***Second Step*, Unit II**

date Oct. 29

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

Your child will soon be learning how to solve problems along with "Impulsive Puppy" and "Slow Down Snail" (puppets from the *Second Step* program). Your child will be using the following steps:

1. What is the problem?
2. What can I do?
3. What might happen if...?
4. Choose an idea and use it.
5. Is it working? If not, what can I do now?



You can **practice** the steps with your child by doing the following:

- Instead of solving your child's problem for her/him ask, "What could you do?" followed by, "That's one idea; what else could you do?"
- When your child comes up with solutions, hold back from judging each idea. After s/he has thought of several ideas, ask your child to evaluate each one (what s/he thinks will happen if s/he tries each one).
- To help evaluate ideas you may also ask:
  - Is it safe?
  - How will people feel?
  - Is it fair?
  - Will it work?
- If one idea doesn't work, encourage your child to try another one.
- Practice solutions with your child. For instance, if s/he is trying to solve the problem of being bored, and chooses to call a friend, have her/him practice what to say before making the call.

In class your child will be practicing the following social skills: *joining in, sharing, taking turns, trading, paying attention* and *interrupting politely*. You may hear about these "role plays" from your child. I will be sending home the steps we use for each social skill so that your child can practice them at home.

On the next page is a list of books for parents which are helpful in teaching the skills found in *Second Step*.

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

TAKE-HOME LETTER
***Second Step*, Unit III**

date 11/25/96

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

For the next month your child will be learning what to do about angry feelings. Your child will be taught the following to say to her/himself:

1. How do I feel?
2. Calm down:
   - take three deep breaths.
   - count slowly to five.
3. Say "calm down."
4. Talk to a grownup about my feelings.

The children are taught that it's okay to feel angry. Feeling angry is not "bad," but how one acts when angry is where many children run into problems. Angry behavior (pushing, hitting, etc.) is not all right.

You **can help** your child to deal with anger by doing the following:

- Help your child to recognize when s/he is angry. Ask "how do you feel about that?" or say "Oooh, that must have been hard on you."

- Take deep breaths, count slowly and say "calm down" with your child when s/he is angry.

- Give your full attention when listening to your child's feelings. Some feelings are hard to accept, but a child can often work out these feelings by talking about them.

- Let your child see you use the skills in real life situations. This may mean thinking out loud as you go through the problem-solving steps.

In class your child will be practicing *calming down and dealing with: being hurt, being called names, having things taken away,* and *not getting what one wants.* I will be sending home the steps we use for each social skill so that your child can practice them at home.

Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely, Miss Kelly

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Sept 30

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Caring

Skill Steps:

- Thinking about how people feel...
- Do something nice to make others feel good
- Always be a good helper.

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

Social Skill

TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Oct. 7

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Teamwork

Skill Steps:

1. Be an encourager. Tell a friend, "Good job"
2. Always be a good listener.
3. Think Positive "We can do it!!" :)

Books to Read: The Enormous Turnip - by Kathy Parkinson
Together - by George Ella Lyon

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,
Miss Kelly

TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Oct. 16

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Effort

Skill Steps:

Try your best!

Never say "I can't"!

Believe you can do anything!

Notes from the teacher: Books to read

① The Little Engine That Could - Retold by Watty Piper
② Hen Lake - by Mary Jane Auch
③ Agatha's Feathered Bed - by: Carmen Agra Deedy
④ Bit-By Bit - by: Steve Sanfield
⑤ The Very Busy Spider by: Eric Carle
⑥ The Lion and the Mouse by Eric Tiltus
⑦ Crow Boy by: Taro Yashima

⑤ To Hilda for Helping by Margot Zemach

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

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Social Skill

TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Oct. 28

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Initiative

Skill Steps:

1 Start a task (or job)

2 Finish your task (or job)

3 Always try your best

Notes from the teacher: Books to read:
1. Scaredy Cat by Lee Lionni
2. I want to be an Astronaut by: Byron Barton
3. Now One Foot, Now the Other by: Tomie de Paola
4. Flossie and the Fox by: Patricia C. McKissack

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date 4/00.4

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Responsibility

Skill Steps:

1 Finish all your work.

2 If you did something wrong always tell the truth and admit it.

3 Look out for your family/friends

Notes from the teacher: Maybe your child can help you do the following at home

1. He/She will make sure his/her room is picked up before going to bed.
2. The child will make his/her bed before going to
3. Help wash/dry the dishes after school
4. Turn off lights when leaving a room

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely, Miss Kelly

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Social Skill

TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Nov. 6

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Confidence

Skill Steps:

1. Tell someone "You're a great friend"
2. Give compliments "I like..."
3. Always tell someone when they've done a good job.

Notes from the teacher: Books to read
① Rainbow Fish - by: Marcus Pfister
② Bedtime for Frances: by: Russell Hoban
③ I Wish I were a Butterfly By James Howe

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,
Miss Kelly

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Nov. 12

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Perserverance (Persistant)

Skill Steps:

1 Always try no matter how hard something may seem!

2 Never give up on anything or anyone

Notes from the teacher: Books to read
① Amazing Grace by · Mary Hoffman
② Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by: Virginia Lee Burton
③ When Will I Read? By Miriam Cohen

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,
Miss Kelly

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date 4 Nov 98

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Problem-Solving

Skill Steps:
1. Ask, "What is the problem?"
2. What can I do?
3. What might happen if...?
4. Choose an idea and use it.
5. Talk to a grownup about it.

Notes from the teacher: Books to Read
① A Bargain for Francis by Lillian Hoban
② Inch by Inch by Leo Lionni

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,
Miss Kelly

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Social Skill

TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date [redacted] 4/20.27

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Common Sense

[redacted]: Taking time to think about the consequences of an action.
1. Will it hurt others or myself
2 What could happen if I do this?
3. Is it OK?
4 Will I get into trouble if I do or say this?

Notes from the teacher: Books to read
1. Froggy Learns to Swim by Jonathan London
2 That's Good; That's Bad by Margery Cuyler
3. Mirette on the High Wire by Emily Arnold McCully
4. Peter and The Wolf by Sergei Prokofiev

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

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TAKE-HOME LETTER
A Social Skill

date Dec. 16

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s),

This week your child has been learning and practicing the social skill listed below. Please practice this skill with your child at home. When you see your child use the skill, give praise or a hug for a job well done.

Social Skill: Motivation

Skill Steps:

1 A need to make something happen.
2 Wanting to make a difference by making changes to a situation

Notes from the teacher:

Books: The Patchwork Quilt
by Valerie Flournoy
Math Curse
by: Jon Scieszka
Lane Smith

If the skill steps are different from the ones your family uses, talk to your child about the differences. See these ideas as not necessarily replacing ones you are using. Thanks again for your support!

Sincerely,

Miss Kelly

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Second Step Songs

Below are the words to the songs recorded on the song/tape. Immediately following are song sheets for those teachers who would like to accompany on a guitar, piano, etc.

Second Step Song, Unit I

How I Feel

I feel proud when I build a big tower;
I feel mad when it gets knocked down.
I feel happy when I eat an ice cream cone;
I feel sad when it plops on the ground.

Refrain:
Whatever I feel I'll tell you about it.
I might want to shout it,
Or whisper in your ear.
Whatever I feel I'll tell you about it.
I'll tell you just how I feel, I feel.
I'll tell you just how I feel.

I feel happy when I go to the park;
I feel excited when a friend comes, too.
I feel brave when I'm flying down the slide;
I feel yucky when sand gets in my shoe.
(Repeat refrain)

I feel happy when the sun is shining;
I feel surprised when lightning flashes.
I feel excited when I watch the stars come out;
I feel scared sometimes when thunder crashes.
(Repeat refrain)

I feel happy when I come to school;
I feel shy when I make a new friend.
I feel a little bit sad when you say goodbye;
I feel glad when I see you again.
(Repeat refrain)

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Second Step Song, Unit III

Take a Deep Breath

Once I knew a volcano
Who almost blew its top.
I took it by the hand and said,
"Here's how you can stop"...

Refrain:
Take a deep breath,
Count to five
Till you feel all calm inside.
Take a deep breath,
Count to five
Till you feel all calm inside.

Talking to your mommy,
Talking to your dad
Can make you feel much better
When you're feeling mad...
(Repeat refrain)

If someone makes you angry
And you don't know what to do,
Just turn around and walk away;
The rest is up to you...
(Repeat refrain)

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Second Step Song, Unit II

Work It Out

Deep in the jungle where the monkeys play,
A baby monkey cries, "I want my way!"
The mother monkey says, "There's no need to shout;
Just wait your turn and work it out."

Refrain:
If you've got a problem, you can work it out.
If you've got a problem, you can work it out.
There's no need to fight, no need to shout;
Just sit right down and work it out.

Deep in the hills where the wolves do roam,
A baby wolf cries, "Someone took my bone!"
The mother wolf says, "There's no need to shout;
Just share your food and work it out."
(Repeat refrain)

Deep on the ground where the mice do creep,
A baby mouse cries, "I'm trying to sleep!"
The mother mouse says, "There's no need to shout;
Just ask nicely—we can work it out."
(Repeat refrain)

Deep in the pond where the frogs do splash,
A baby frog cries, "He made me crash!"
The mother frog says, "There's no need to shout;
Apologize now and work it out."
(Repeat refrain)

Appendix D

Poem

If I believe in myself, I can do it.

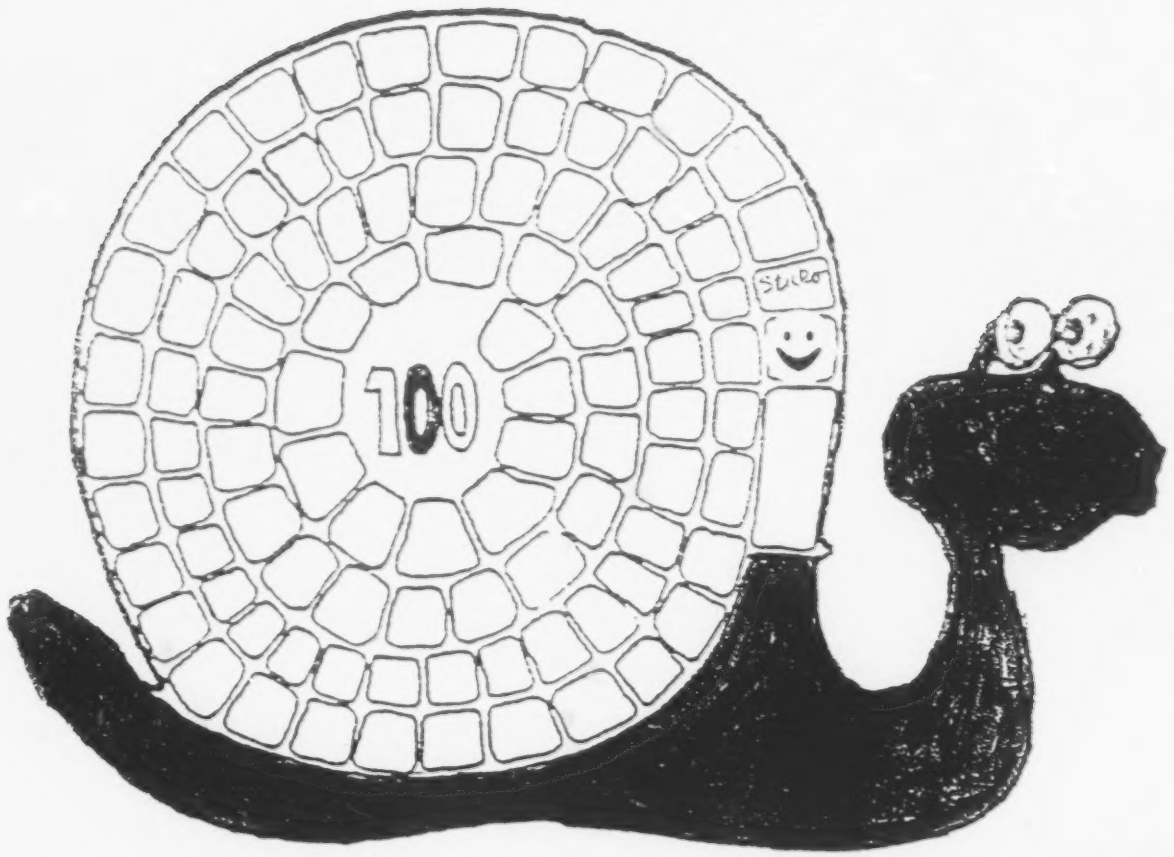
If I believe in myself, there's no stopping me.

If I believe in myself, I know I can win.

Believing in myself is where it all begins.

Appendix E

Super Students Incentive Chart



Name Miss Kelly's Super Students

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